

The Art of
**Painting Animals
on Rocks**



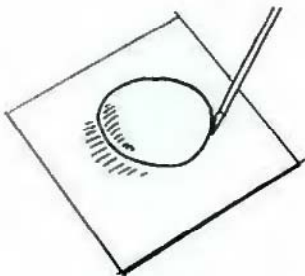
Lin Wellford

1 Layout.

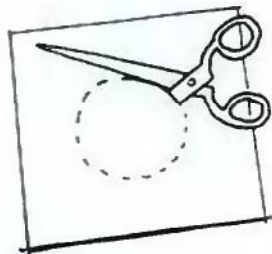
When you have found a promising stone, scrub and let it dry. Then sketch the wings on freehand as shown. Or, if you prefer, use the template method to lay out the wings.



Wing pattern.



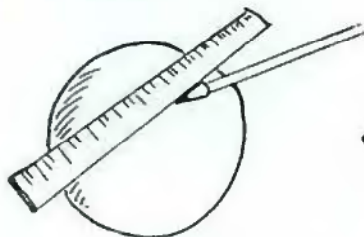
1. Set your stone on a piece of paper and carefully trace all the way around the bottom with a pencil.



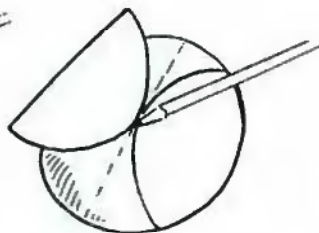
2. Cut out the circle or oval you just traced.



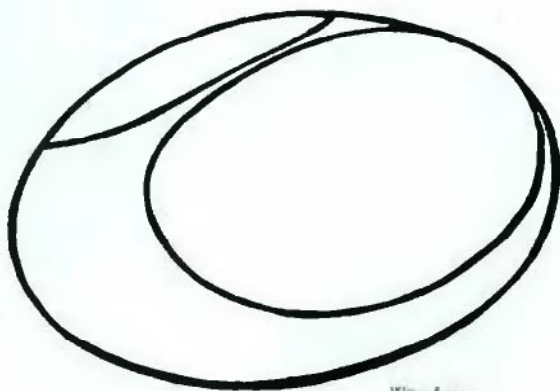
3. Fold it in half. The curving side will serve as the plate for the ladybug's wings.



4. With a pencil and ruler or other straightedge, draw a line down the exact center of your stone.



5. Place the curved edge of your template so it covers half of the stone. Now carefully trace around the curved edge of your template. Flip the pattern over and reposition to make a matching curved line on the opposite side.



Wing design.

Your stone should be divided into three sections: two equal wings and a slightly smaller head area, leaving only a slight triangle showing at the tail end where the wings curve in opposite directions. Round out your wing shapes into ovals. If your first attempt isn't satisfactory, simply scrub away the pencil marks and try again.

2 Painting the Black Areas.

Pour a small puddle of black acrylic paint into your painting dish. If you're using craft paint you probably won't need to add water. With tube paint, however, you may need to experiment with water to obtain the right consistency. The paint should be loose enough to apply easily, but retain enough body for solid coverage. If your paint is runny or if the stone shows through when dry, your paint was too thin and may require a second coat. If, on the other hand, your brush drags dryly over the stone and coverage is rough and broken, try moistening your paint by adding drops of water sparingly.

Use black to cover every part of the stone except the oval wings and the bottom of the stone. You can use a larger brush for most areas, but switch to your smallest brush to paint the line where the two wings come together on top. This line should not be more than $\frac{1}{8}$ " wide. Allow the black paint to dry thoroughly before you go on to the next step.



Cover every part of the stone except the wings.



Turn your stone to paint around the wings.

3 Adding Wing Color.

Have you decided what color you want your bug to be? Red, yellow and orange are all good choices, but lighter colors may need several coats for complete coverage. Paint around the edges of the wings, keeping your strokes steady. If you need more than one coat, let the paint dry between applications.

Turn your stone around as you paint to insure that your wings are colored in all the way around. If you accidentally paint over the black undercoat at any point, don't panic. Simply allow the paint to dry, then go over it with a little more black paint to repair the place.



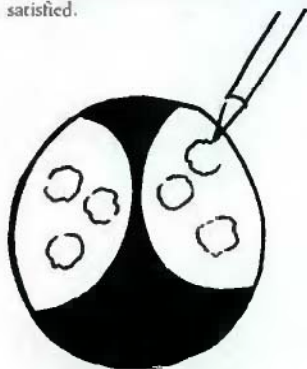
Red, yellow and orange are good choices for wing colors.



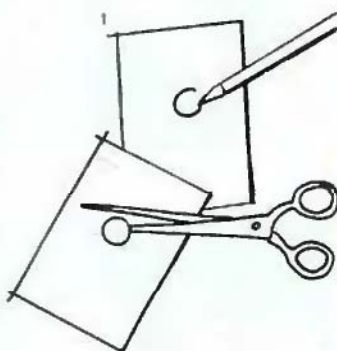
Suggested spot designs.

4 Painting the Spots.

How many decorative spots you paint and where they go is up to you. You may only want a couple of large spots on each side, or you may decide to scatter smaller ones about. However many you choose to paint, be sure to space them uniformly so they don't touch or overlap. Both wings should match. Use a pencil to sketch spots on the dried wing areas. Remember that sketch marks can be painted over at any point and redone until you are satisfied.



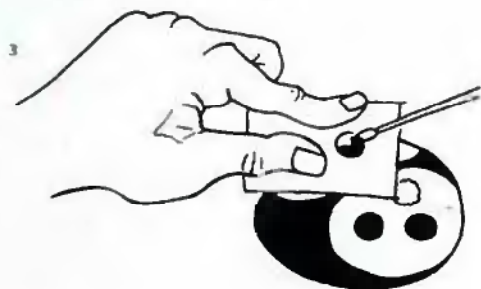
You can sketch the spots on freehand with a pencil.



If you don't feel you can paint a round spot freehand or if you want all the spots exactly the same size, try making a stencil. (1) Trace a circle of the desired size on a note card or other stiff material. (2) Cut out the center. (3) Line the hole up over one of the spots you sketched onto your stone. Press firmly around the edges of the stencil to hold it in place and use your medium brush to dab on just enough



black paint to fill in the circle. Carefully lift the card straight up to avoid smearing. Allow each spot to dry before going on to the next. To speed things up, switch to the other wing and work there while waiting. (4) After you have completed your pattern of spots and let them dry, you may need to go around some of them with the wing color and smallest brush to smooth rough edges.



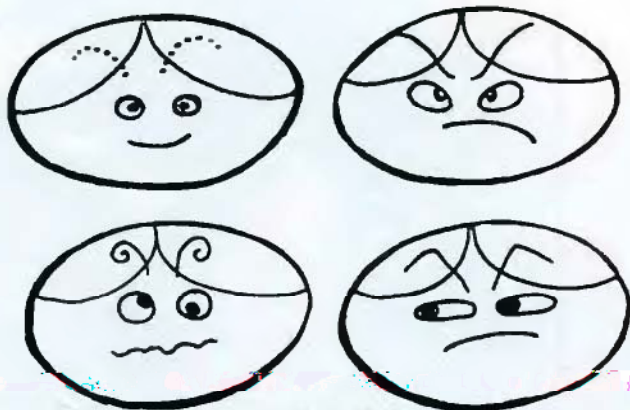
5 The Face.

Your bug's personality will be determined by the expression she wears. I prefer a happy look, but there are many other choices.

Whether you use one of my expression designs or make up your own, take extra care when painting your bug's features. Use a small brush and be sure the paint is thick enough to show up against the black background of the face. You may have to go over the features more than once to make them stand out clearly. If you aren't happy with your *first attempt*, you can always paint out what you don't like and try again.

To protect your bug and make the colors look brighter, you may wish to seal the surface. Use spray-on polyurethane or wipe on an acrylic finish such as Future floor polish with a lint-free cloth.

After you've painted a ladybug or two, you may feel like really going buggy! Bugs come in an amazing array of shapes and colors. Books about insects are a great place to get ideas for other kinds of bugs to try painting. Or use your imagination to come up with your own make-believe bugs.



Buggy expressions.



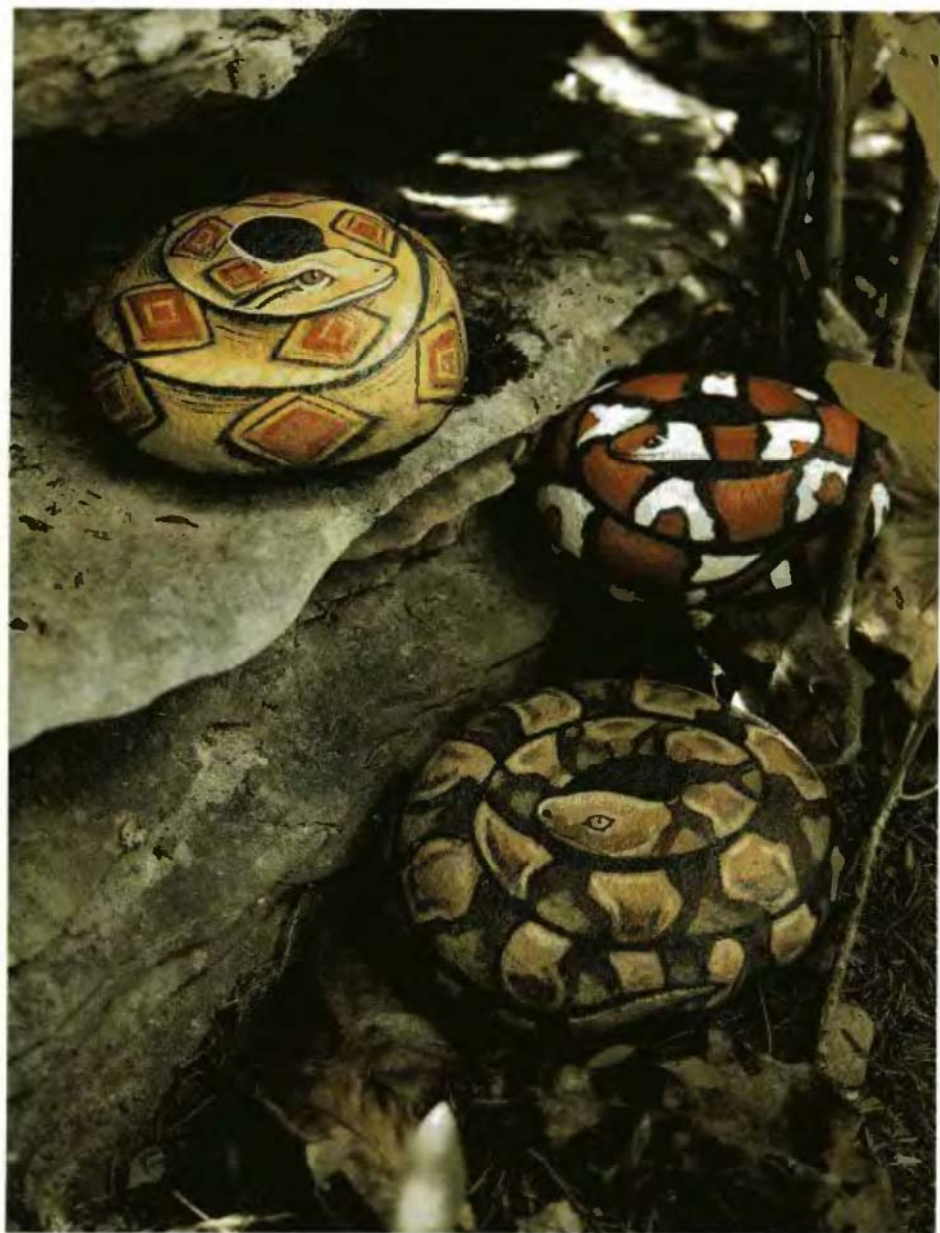
Use thick white paint for the eyeballs.



Adding antennae.



An array of colorful bugs.



How to Paint a Snake

These "rocky reptiles" are only a little more involved than ladybugs and make another excellent project for beginning stone painters. My stone coral snake has an interesting pattern of variegated bands that is colorful yet still relatively simple to paint.

The best snake stones are either round or oval, 6" to 7" in diameter and 2" or 3" thick at their center. As with all stone projects, begin by scrubbing your stone and allowing it to dry.



A perfect snake rock.

Top Views



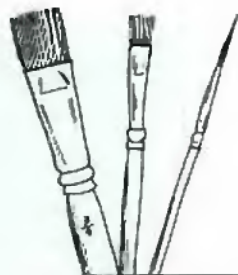
Side Views



Round or oval rocks work well as snakes.

What You'll Need

- acrylic paints in black, yellow, red and white
- large, medium and narrow brushes
- a pencil

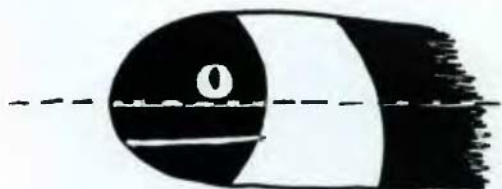


5 Finishing Touches.

After the black areas have dried, paint in a small red eye circle with your narrowest brush. The eye should be placed in the black area of the snout about $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the beginning of the first yellow band. Using the same fine brush, define individual coils by mixing a drop of red paint with just enough black to get a deep maroon color. Stroke three or four thin, closely spaced horizontal lines along the bottom half of every red band. These brush lines need not be perfectly uniform. Your snake will actually look more realistic if they are somewhat uneven and random.



Highlight the red coils with maroon strokes.



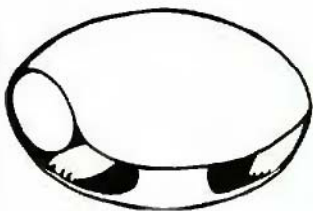
The bottom of the eye should rest on the imaginary midline of the head.



Heighten your snake's realism with horizontal lines along the bottom of each coil.

2 Creating Contours.

Use black paint and your small brush to give the stone the illusion of having contours. Outline around the head oval, front legs, tail, and back legs, then fill in any remaining areas between the top and bottom shells all the way around. Do not paint over the connecting side segments. Be sure the line around the top of the head is distinct so the head stands out. Allow the paint to dry.



Side view of turtle layout.



Outline the head and legs in black.

3 Adding a Base Color.

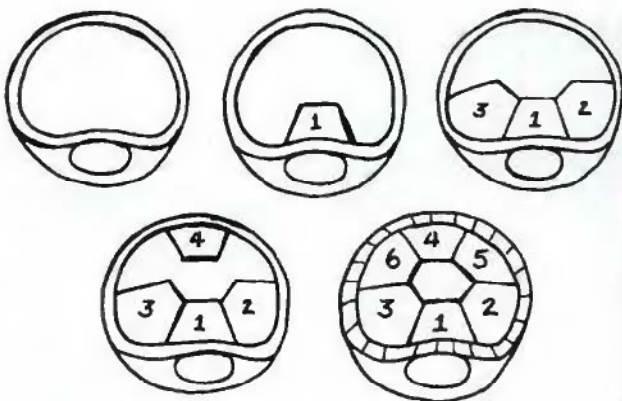
Mix enough shell color to cover remaining surface areas. I mix a medium green with just enough brown to create a subtle, understated olive color. You may prefer to use straight green, or to mix green and blue for a deep turquoise. The darker the basic shell color is, the more contrast you'll have when you paint in the details later. You can use your largest brush to fill in the top shell fast, but for better control, use your small or medium brush to color in the the head, legs and tail. Also paint the connecting segments between the top and bottom shell at this time. Allow the green to dry.



4 The Shell Pattern.

When the stone is thoroughly dry, use a pencil to lay out the shell pattern. First sketch a parallel border along the inside of the upper shell. The border should not be more than $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide.

Now divide the shell into sections, starting with one directly above the head. You should end up with six, more or less equal, four-sided segments around the outside with one six-sided segment in the center. The outer segments should taper inward. If you aren't happy with your first attempt, mix some matching green paint, cover over your marks and try again.



Drawing in the shell segments.



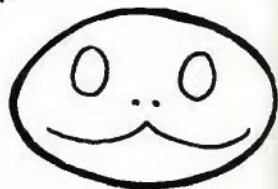
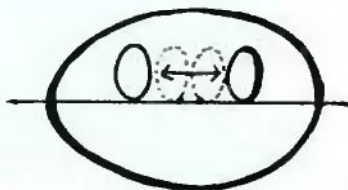
Make a border along the edge of the top shell.



Mistakes can always be pointed over and redrawn.

5 The Face.

Divide the oval head shape in two horizontally. Two dots forming the turtle's nostrils should rest in the center of the face directly on this midline. The eyes are ovals standing on end on either side of the nostrils. Space them approximately two eye widths apart. The mouth is composed of two gently curving lines that come together in a point just below the nostrils.



6 Adding Details.

Now you're ready to paint details. Use your smallest brush and bright yellow paint to trace all the pencil marks on the shell. Start with the inside and outside borders of the shell, then do the lines for each individual shell segment. It may take more than one coat for the lines to stand out sharply against the green background. Divide the outside border of the shell into small rectangular segments by painting short, vertical lines at intervals all the way around. Allow the paint to dry between coats for best results.

Moving to the head, duplicate the markings around the eyes along the bottom of the mouth and down the chin as shown in the illustration. Also paint the edge of the bottom shell with yellow where it shows between the front feet and back feet. Outline the edges of the connecting side segments also. I like to paint broken or dotted yellow lines down the front legs for added visual interest. While these details dry, mix a small amount of red with yellow paint to get a deep orange. Use this to fill in the eye ovals. You may also use this orange paint to punch up the yellow lines of your shell segments here and there. Use this orange also to highlight the dots on the legs. These touches are not vital, but they will enhance the realism of your turtle.



Outline the shell segments with a bright color.



Add character and vivacity with bright yellow markings.

7 Finishing Touches.

When the orange eyes are dry, paint a small black iris in the center of each one. At the same time, carefully outline the eyes with black to make them stand out clearly. Create bulging eye sockets by echoing the shape of the eyes in black as shown.

Clean your brush well and mix a combination of green and yellow to get a light green. Use this color to create the geometric pattern on each segment of the turtle's shell. The simplest design resembles a squared-off capital G. If you're good at doing fine lines, you can make sets of nesting squares instead. Finish by placing a tiny dot of pure white at the edge of the iris in each eye to give your turtle the "sparkle of life." Sign the bottom and apply a coat of finish to heighten the colors.

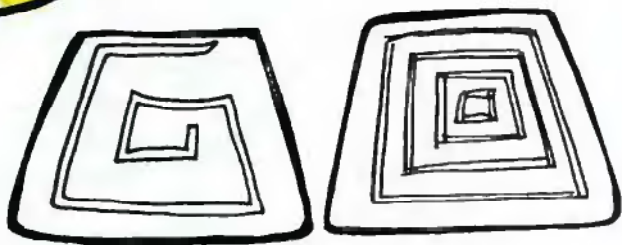
Look for photos in magazines or books for more ideas of other varieties of turtles. Box turtles are basically brown but some have wonderful shell patterns.



Outline the orange eyes in black.



Black curving lines on the insides of the eyes make them appear "bulging."



Shell designs.



How to Paint a Rock Rabbit

When you're ready to tackle a more detailed project, this wild rabbit is a good place to start. Select a smooth stone similar in shape to a large baking potato. The stone should have a flat bottom so it will sit without rolling over.

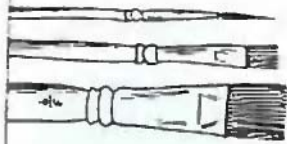
While the ideal rabbit rock is oval as shown in view A, there are many variations that will also work. Your stone may be taller and narrower (B), it may have a blunt, somewhat squared

shape, (C) or taper off slightly at one end (D). The most important features are a flat bottom for stability and overall symmetry of shape.

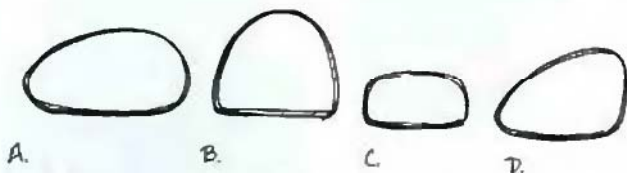
Once you find a promising stone, prepare the surface with a good scrubbing and allow to dry. Beginners will find it easier to paint on a stone with a smooth or fine-grained surface. It's much more difficult to achieve the kind of detail you'll want on a rough or pitted surface.

What You'll Need

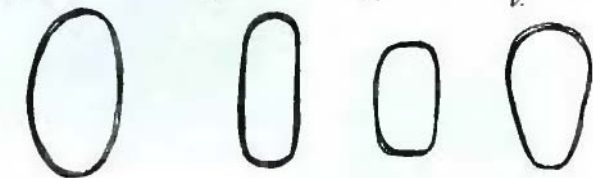
- acrylic paints in black, white, gold, red and burnt sienna
- large, medium and narrow brushes
- a pencil or piece of chalk



Side views.



Top views.



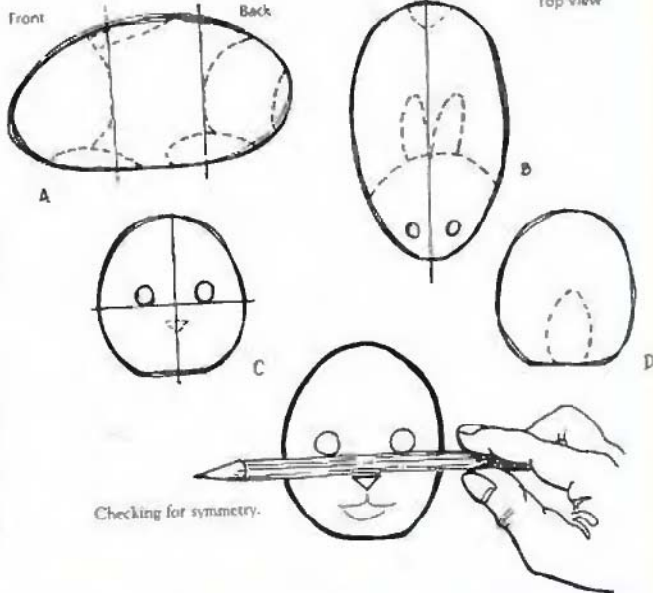
A variety of stone sizes and shapes will work as painted rabbits.



A perfect rabbit rock.

1 Layout.

Using your largest brush, cover all but the very bottom of your stone with a coat of black paint. If the stone dries with a grayish cast, apply a second, heavier coat. When the paint is dry you can begin sketching in basic shapes. Imagine your stone is divided into thirds (view A). The first third encompasses the jowl area, and the back third is the haunch area. With a sharpened pencil or white chalk, lightly sketch in these guidelines. Sketch curving jowl lines on both sides of the head end, and check from the top to be sure both jowls are about the same. At the top of the stone (view B) these two lines meet to form the forehead. The ears begin at the top of the forehead, extending backward toward the middle of the stone (view B).



Now move to the face (view C). Imagine the front of your stone is divided into quarters. The bottoms of the eyes will rest on a bisecting horizontal line. Eyes that are too large in proportion to the stone will give your bunny a "cartoon" look, so keep them small. Allow a minimum of one and one-half eye widths between them. Check for symmetry by lining up a pencil with the bottom of the eye circles.

If you aren't satisfied with your guidelines at any point, simply dab them away with a damp rag or go over them with more black paint and try again.

Next, center a nose triangle along the vertical bisecting line. It shouldn't be much wider across the top than one of the eyes. Turn your stone around and add an oval-shaped tail to the rear end (view D). Tuck two sets of paws along the bottom edge of either side. Now you're ready to begin painting.



Paws should be easily visible but not too big.

2 White Contrasts.

Fill in the paws and tail areas with white, using enough paint for solid coverage.

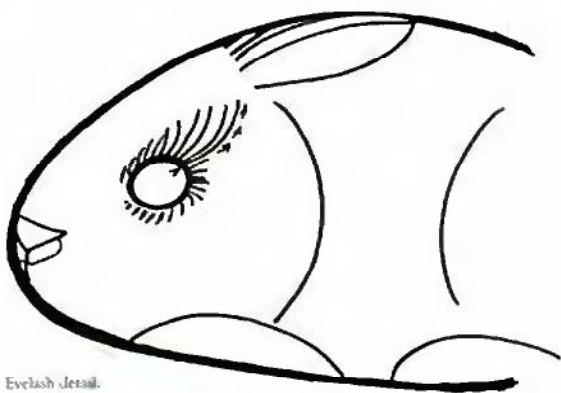
The paws and tail look fluffier if you feather your strokes outward along the edges. Next switch to a smaller brush to paint in two short white lines along the bottom angles of the nose. Outline the basic shape of the ears. Paint a second, parallel line inside the upper edge of each ear to indicate a flap.



Add a line to the inside of each ear to make a flap.

3 Eyelashes.

Still using white paint and your small brush, stroke in a series of delicate "eyelash" lines. Begin at the outside upper corner of each eye and stroke in a long, curved line extending nearly to the base of the ear. Add more lashes, shortening them as you work toward the inside of each eye. Make a fringe of shorter, curving lashes along the bottom edges of both eyes. Leave an outline of black between these lash lines and the eye circle.



Eyelash detail.



Painting the eyes step-by-step.

4 Eye and Ear Color.

Fill in both eye circles with burnt sienna. Keep the eyes neat and round. If they look uneven, or if you accidentally paint over the eyelash lines, let your brown paint dry, then use black to recircle and redefine the eyes later. Add a touch of golden yellow paint to the sienna on your palette and blend to get a lighter shade of brown. With this color form a half-circle inside the bottom portion of each eye. This will give the eyes a more lifelike depth. When the eyes are dry, use black paint to make two oval irises. They should touch the top of each eye circle.

Work on the ears next. Clean your brush well and mix small amounts of red with white until you have a medium shade of pink. Add just enough gold to soften it to a pale flesh tone. Use this color to fill in the insides of the ears, not quite meeting the white outlines you painted earlier. I gave the ear flap unpainted for now. Add burnt sienna to darken the flesh tone on your palette. Use this new color to create a shadowed effect along the upper edges of the ears just below the ear flaps.



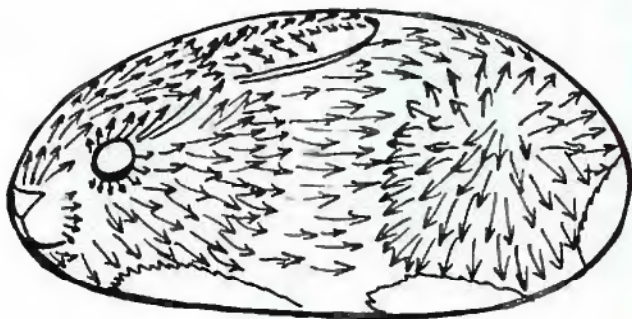
Shading the insides of the ears.

5 Fur Lines.

You're now ready to paint in the fur lines that will give your rabbit its soft, realistic look. Fur lines should be as thin and delicate as possible. Dilute the paint enough to flow on easily but not to the point of transparency. You'll want your fur lines to dry crisp and clear. Begin the fur by making a series of short, perpendicular strokes following the curved line of the jowl. Refer to the directional guide at right for guidance in placing your strokes.

Do a second row of longer strokes just inside the first set. Allow each line to taper into a point by easing the pressure on the brush as you lift. Create a shingled effect, allowing your rows to overlap slightly. Vary the direction and size of your strokes for realism.

Three or four sets of overlapping fur lines should bring you close to the bottom eyelashes. Be sure to stop before reaching these lash lines so that some dark contrast remains around the eye areas. Repeat the process with the other jowl, then move on to the haunches.



Follow the arrows on this guide for realistic fur patches.

Fill in the haunch with rows of strokes that angle out like spokes on a wheel. Start on the outside and work toward the center of each haunch. Overlap your strokes to create a shingled effect.

Next, move to your rabbit's back. Start between the ears, leaving a narrow area of black paint surrounding the ears for contrast. Work back toward the tail, varying the length and angle of your strokes. You may indicate

shoulders by allowing your strokes to form an M-shaped row behind the head. Skip a space and start a fresh row of fur farther back. Leave several other similar spaces showing as you continue to work toward the back of the stone. Stop just short of the tail. Allow your lines to dwindle in number as you move down the body so that much of the bottom remains plain black above the paws.



Feather the jowl line with tiny short strokes.



Fill in the haunch with strokes that angle out like spokes in a wheel.



Remember to leave open spaces around the ears and other features.



Tiny fur lines soften the ears.

6 Facial Features.

The nose, muzzle and forehead are next. Darken a little deep pink paint with a bit of burnt sienna. Fill in the center of the nose triangle, leaving an outline of black surrounding it.

Clean your brush and switch to white paint. Make a series of tiny,

splinter-sized fur strokes along the outside of the ears to make them softer and more natural looking. Scatter some longer whisker lines in the pink part of each ear.

The forehead fur begins just above the nose and fans upward and outward

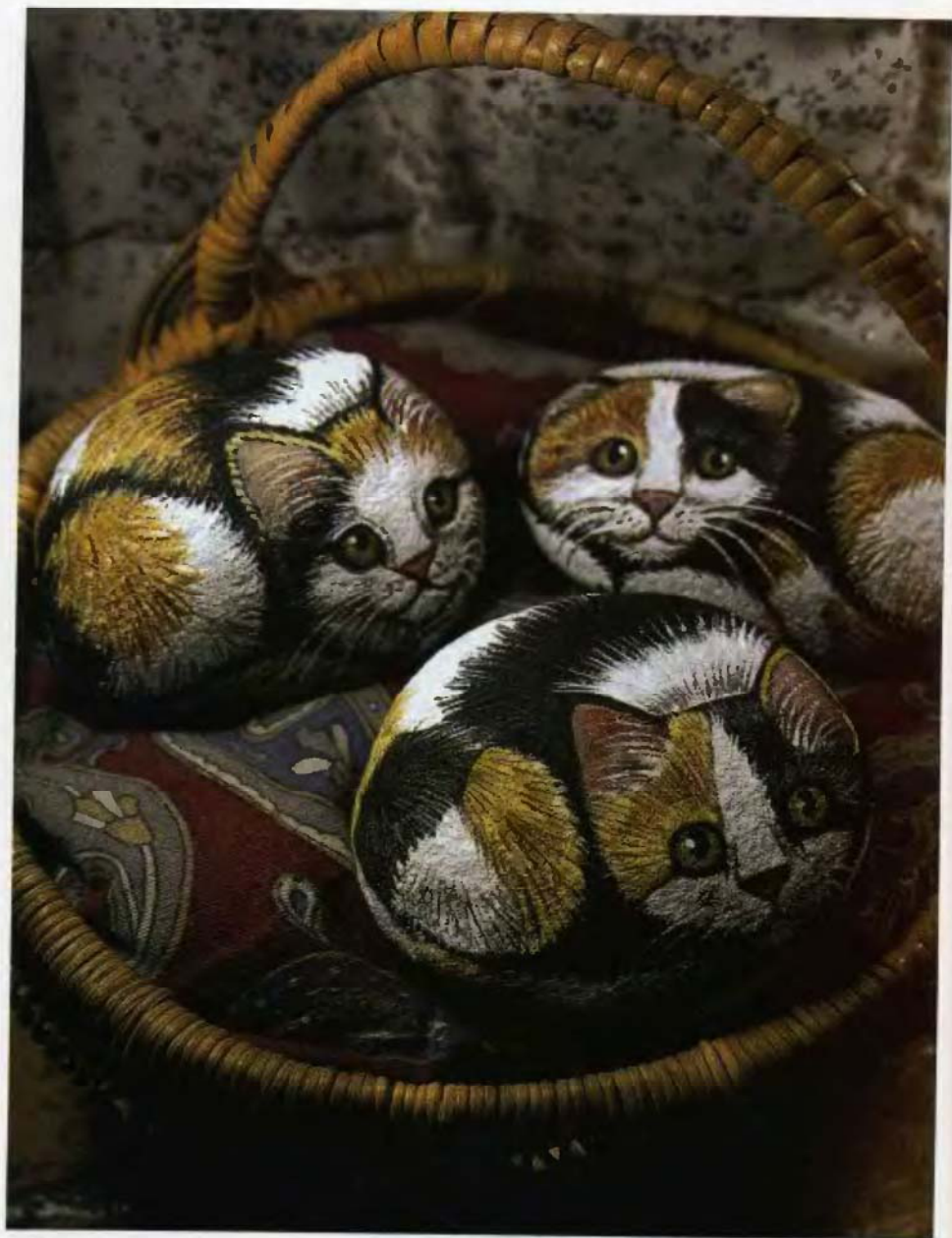
in uneven, shingled rows. Stop before you reach the base of the ears and make one final row of dense, short lines along the top of the head. Leave an area of black showing between these lines and the base of the ears for contrast.



Facial features.



You may find it easier to paint the forehead fur by holding your stone upside down.

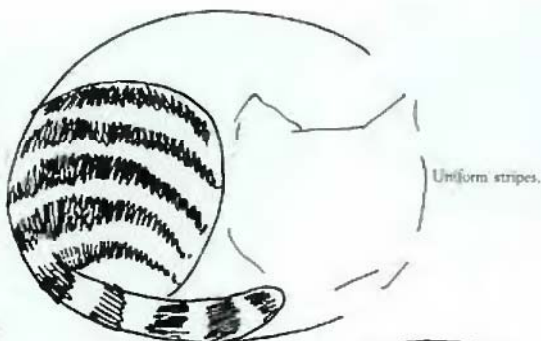


4 Basic Stripes.

For the stripes use a medium-sized flat brush. I prefer an older brush whose bristles have separated with age. This allows me to create a distinct fur texture with each stroke. If you don't have a brush like this, apply stripes in solid but ragged lines. You can go back over them later and add texture with a contrasting color.

Mix gold paint with a bit of white to get a pale, sandy color. Your cat's stripes may be uniform or more uneven and broken. If you aren't sure how to do the stripes, try sketching them in with chalk first and curving them to create the illusion of roundness to the haunch. Next, turn your stone around and begin the back stripes in two sets an inch or so beyond the top of the head. Leave a strip of the darker base coat at the nape of the neck and running down along the curve of the spine until it disappears around the edge of stone. The back stripes should be an inch or so wide, curving gently around the shoulders.

Use the same pale gold and your medium or smallest brush to paint in the pattern of facial stripes as shown. Fill in the muzzle area as well.



Broken stripes.



Without rinsing out your brush, switch to plain white paint and stroke in the lighter stripes along the cat's tail and the tips of the cat's paws. Make several narrower stripes along the front

legs also. Encircle the eyes with white and make two small white patches on the muzzle just below the nose. Also paint in the chin area with white.



Painting the haunch stripes.



Leave a strip of base coat showing between the stripes on your cat's back.

7 Finishing Touches.

To complete your cat, add just enough water to your white paint to get a consistency that will flow on smoothly yet remain opaque. Extend four or five long, curving whiskers outward from each side of the muzzle area. The lower whiskers may overlap the tail or the paws. Make another set of long, graceful lines inside the ears.

At this point examine your cat from every angle to see if touching up is needed. Pay particular attention to easily overlooked areas like the side of the stone just beyond the outside edge of the head. Determine if the paws require some additional texture. You may use the tip of your brush to stroke a line of white fuzz along the tops of them. The whiskers may need going over more than once to insure that they stand out clearly. Or you can bring them out nicely by painting a narrow line of black along the bottom of each one.

You can adapt these techniques to any number of curled-up cat rocks. Try a sleeping cat with its eyes closed in contented crescents; or change the base coat to deep brown, make the lighter stripes tan and the fur lines black to paint a brown tiger cat. These cats look especially nice displayed in baskets or curled onto pillows. Experiment with stripe patterns and collect photos of cats to help you achieve a more realistic look.



Whisker detail.



A cat on a lap.



How to Paint a Raccoon

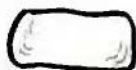
Whether real or stone, these little masked bandits are apt to steal away the hardest of hearts. With their mischievous antics and comical faces, live raccoons have won widespread popularity. They also make terrific subjects for rock painting because so many different stone shapes work for them.

The most common shape, and the one demonstrated here, is an upright, half-circle-shaped stone. It can be uniformly curved on top, slightly squared off, or perhaps even sloping to one side. Occasionally I run across what I call a "tombstone"-type rock, one which is bluntly rounded but stands taller. These rocks are ideal for painting a "raccoon" as though it has reared up on its hind legs, with the front paws held to its chest. It's OK for a raccoon rock to be on the narrow side, but any stones less than 4" thick will be too thin. Since you have many choices, try to envision some ways an animal can be fitted to various shapes and sizes.

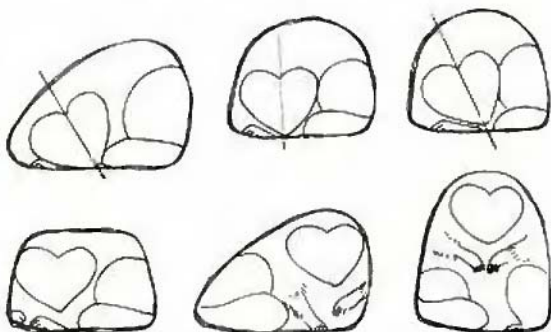


Side views [L].

Top views [R].



A variety of rock shapes can be transformed into raccoons.



Your layout will depend on the dimensions of your stone.

Prepare your stone for painting by insuring the surface is clean and free of loose material or debris.

Before you begin your layout, use your largest brush and black paint to completely cover the surface of the stone, leaving only the bottom unpainted. Let this base coat dry thoroughly.



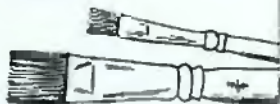
Selecting your rock.



The base coat.

What You'll Need

- black, white, burnt sienna and gold acrylic paints
- chalk
- assorted brushes
- tape measure



1 Layout.

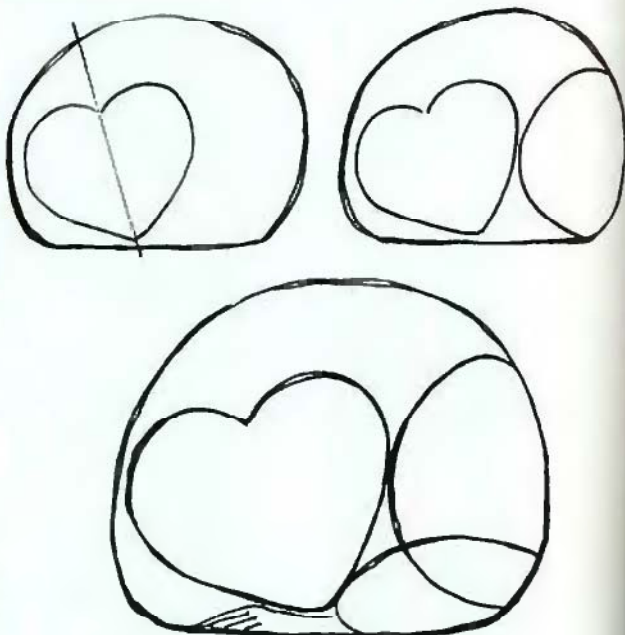
The proportions for a crouching pose will differ from those for a standing animal. Generally, the head takes up a larger percentage of the stone in a crouched pose (roughly half the width of the stone). In an upright pose the raccoon's head will take up less space in proportion to overall body size (usually a little over $\frac{1}{3}$).

Positioning the head is the first and most important step of the layout process. The head can be set level or tilted slightly, as I have done. On sloping stones where there is not much room, tilting the head may be the best solution for fitting the ears into the available space. Another option is to place the head on the higher side and fit the haunch onto the sloping end.

The head will be shaped like a short, fat heart. On my 9" stone, this heart

measures 4" across the top. Use chalk to sketch in your head until it looks right. The haunch is similar in size to the head, but circular instead of heart shaped. Let it curve around the end of the stone. The tail is fat with a blunt tip. Bring it around from the end of the stone, stopping just short of the head. If you have positioned your head high enough, sketch in a front paw under the chin.

Note that raccoons' front feet (on page 63) look almost like small human hands while the rear feet are longer with shorter toes. Turn your stone around and make a matching haunch on the back side with a little bit of the long back foot showing. Now you are ready to begin sketching in facial details.



Begin with several basic shapes.



Rear foot.



Front paw.



Face Layout

Divide the heart-shaped face in thirds vertically. If you opted to tilt the head, angle the lines to match. Set the ears so their inside corners touch the lines you've drawn. Raccoon ears vary in size depending on the age of the animal. Here, the ears extend a little over 1" from the top of the head. The total height of one ear should be about equal to the distance between the two ears.

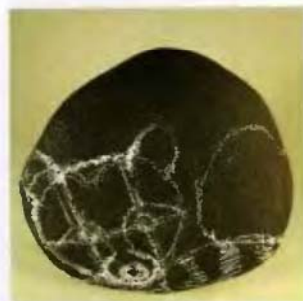
Next, bisect the head horizontally. The raccoon's eyes will be centered on the points where this horizontal line crosses the two vertical lines. Space the eyes slightly less than two eye

widths apart. Add triangles to the inside edge of each eye to suggest tear ducts.

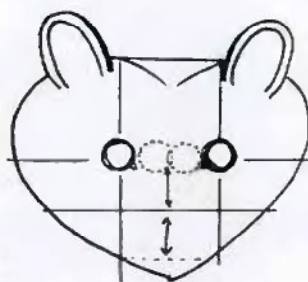
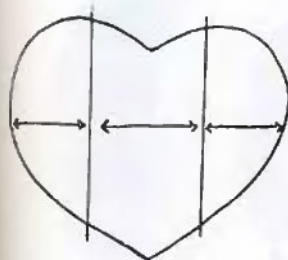
Draw another horizontal guideline halfway between the midline and the bottom of the face. This point represents the top edge of the animal's muzzle. The outside perimeters of the muzzle circle are defined by the two vertical lines you made earlier. Draw a circle to create the muzzle.

In the center of the muzzle sketch an oval nose shape. The raccoon's nose should be slightly larger than one of his eyes.

That completes the layout process. Now you are ready to paint.



Ready to paint.



Basic shapes develop the facial features.



2 Fur Patches.

Use your medium brush and white paint to fill in the muzzle area surrounding the nose, but leave a wedge-shaped portion of the black base coat uncovered at the top. Heavily outline the ears with white. Next, without rinsing your brush, add several drops of gold paint to your dish and soften it to a pale straw color with white. Use this color to brush in three or four vertical bands along the raccoon's tail. These bands should be $\frac{1}{2}$ " to $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide with ragged edges.



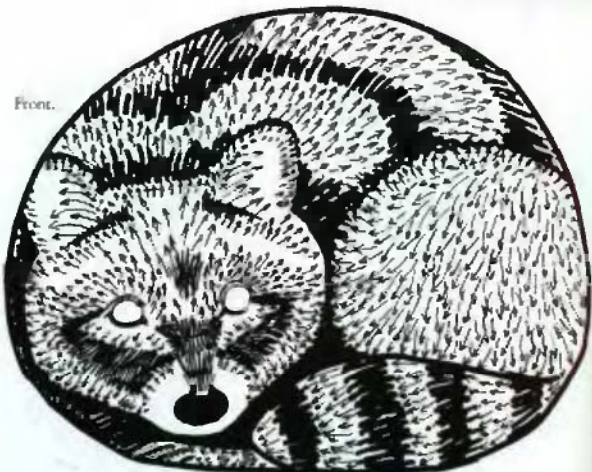
Tail bands.

The fur lines are next. Study the directional guide above to determine the general pattern.

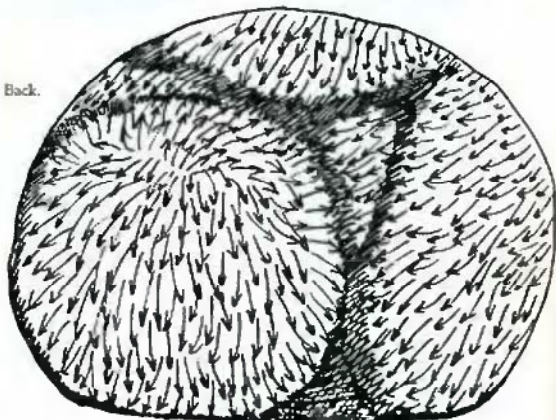
Using your narrowest brush and plain white paint, begin your first lines at the inside corner of each eye. Your strokes should be nearly solid at the base, but should fan out above the eye. Lengthen and angle your strokes as you move around toward the side of the face. Blend a second tier of fur lines into the first, allowing your tapering strokes to vary slightly in length and direction as they fill in the remaining area below the ear.

Move to the other eye and repeat these steps. Leave a blank space in the middle of the forehead as an extension of the dark area above the nose and between the eyes. Also leave a narrow

Front.



Back.



Painting the tail step-by-step.



4 The Eyes.

The eyes should now be the last unpainted portion of your stone raccoon. Real raccoons' eyes are so dark they seem black, but I paint them dark brown so they stand out from the surrounding black mask. Mix a brushful of burnt sienna with a tinge of black to get a deep chocolate brown. Carefully fill in the eye circles with this color. While they are still wet, dip the tip of your brush into a drop of straight burnt sienna and stroke it sparingly in a half-

circle around the lower half of the eyes. This warms the eyes, giving them depth and clarity. While they dry, go around the outside of the eyes with a delicate line of black to emphasize their shape. Add a very thin eyelid line just above either eye as well. While you have black on your brush, look for areas where your fur lines may need separating or redefining. A few thin black strokes can correct white fur lines that look blotchy or are too thick.



Filling in the eyes.

5 Detailing the Face.

Clean your brush and return to straight burnt sienna. Use this color to make a fringe along the top of each eye. Stroke in a few longer lines along the inside corners of the eyes and both ears. Do a similar fringe around the top half of the muzzle and sprinkle more reddish-brown strokes up into the bridge of the nose.

Add texture to the light stripes on the tail with a series of brown horizontal strokes. Turn your raccoon on his side and sprinkle some brown fur along his front and rear paws.

Now add enough gold paint to your burnt sienna to get a warm golden-brown. Use this color to soften the black mask below each eye with fine lines.

Clean your brush, switch to black paint and carefully place an oval iris into the center of each eye so it just touches the top of the eye circle.



At first, the face is only black and white.



Add highlights with burnt sienna.



Speckle touches of golden-brown under the eyes and on the bridge of the nose.



Face detail with subtle highlights.



Blending the tail fur for a sleek look.

2 Painting the Shadows.

With a large or medium brush and black paint, fill in the shadows between the haunch and the inside ear, and behind the ear inside the curving line of the spine. Feather out the shadows as you move away from these features. Outline the ears, the upper haunch, and the space between the chin and hind leg. Also black out any portion showing below the crooked hind leg. This is especially important if your stone has a convex front side that you want to play down. Use your small or medium brush to outline the head and the eye, and to fill the nose and hoof. Paint the tail in black, feathering out your strokes along the edges.

3 Base Color.

Pour two good-sized puddles of burnt sienna and gold into your paint dish. Use your large- or medium-sized brush to mix the two colors in the center, leaving some unmixed pigment on either side. Fill in the haunch and the entire hind leg. Also fill in the head, being careful not to paint over any black outlines. Dip the tip of your brush into the gold side of your paint and stroke highlights along the top edge of the forehead and the top of the outside ear. A little straight gold along the upper curve of the haunch will bring out its shape as well. Clean your brush and dip it into straight burnt sienna. Stroke this color in a curve beginning at the nape of the neck and moving back along the spine all the way around to the base of the tail. Feather a few horizontal strokes here and there in the black area between the haunch and the inside ear to soften the shadows. Use burnt sienna all along the lower edge of the hind leg to give it more volume. Leave the chest area unpainted for now.



Ready to paint.



Painting the shadows



Burnt sienna serves as a base color.

6 Tinting.

Next mix several drops of burnt sienna with an equal amount of gold to get a warm red-brown. Fill in the eye circles with this color. Switching to your larger brush, add water to this reddish-brown color to make a wash. Test the consistency on newspaper to be sure the tint is transparent. Use this tint to deepen the color of select fur lines. Begin by feathering strokes out from behind the head, but leave the tips of your lines untinted. Move down to the next sets of lines on the back and tint the area closest to the shadowed borders, again leaving the tips untouched.

On the haunch, avoid tinting the outermost set of prickly strokes, but tint the inner fur lines. Remember, if the tint pigment is too heavy, it will obscure your original brush strokes. If that happens, pick up the excess pigment with a tissue while it is still wet and add more water to your wash.

On the face, tint the area between the eyes and feather your strokes into the forehead. Leave the light areas around the eyes. Tint the entire tail.



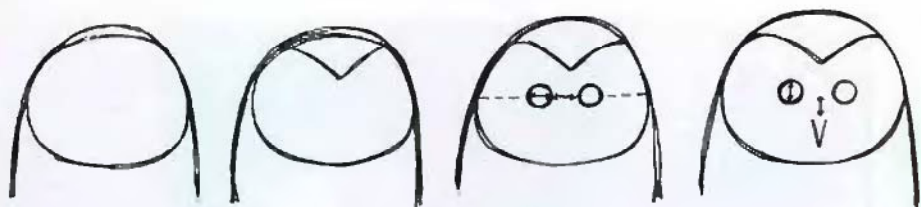
Filling in the eyes.



Tinting behind the ears.



Avoid coloring the edges of the haunch.



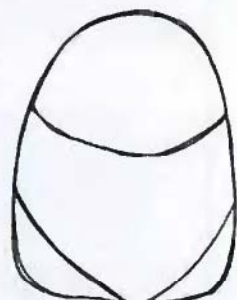
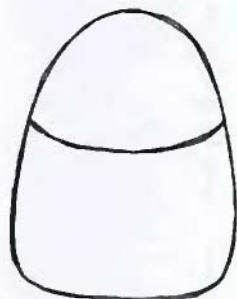
Steps for face layout.

After the face oval is in place, modify it by creating a V-shape in the middle of the forehead. Then bisect the oval horizontally and use the midline as a guide for the eyes. Owls have dramatically large, round eyes. Eye diameter will vary with the size of your stone. On the three owls I measured previously, the size of the eyes are:

- 8" tall owl—just over $\frac{1}{8}$ " across
- 7" tall owl— $\frac{1}{2}$ " across
- 6" tall owl—just over $\frac{1}{8}$ " across
- $5\frac{1}{2}$ " tall owl—just under $\frac{1}{8}$ " across

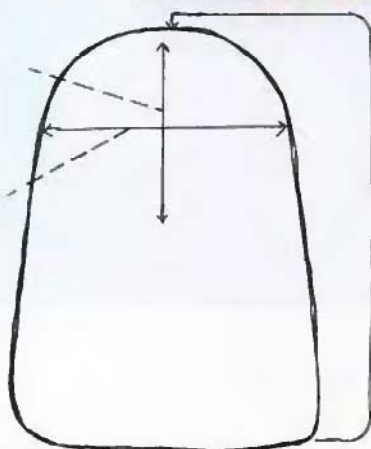
Use the height of your own stone to determine the size of the eyes, then center them on the midline one eye space apart. To determine beak placement, measure one eye-width down from between the eyes on the midline. Mark that as the top of the beak. The beak itself should be a narrow triangle whose point doesn't quite reach to the bottom of the face.

Now turn your rock so the back is facing you. Draw a neck line around the back of the head. Indicate the tail with a wide V at the base. The sides of this V should bow gently outward around the curving sides of your stone and touch the perimeters of the face oval in front. If you look at your rock sideways, the wing lines should cut diagonally from the face to the tail. The remaining portion of the body will be the breast.



Vertical measurement may be up to 50 percent of overall height.

Horizontal measurement may be up to 75 percent of overall height.



Overall height.

Blocking in the wing and tail areas.

2 Face and Head Details.

Use your narrow brush to outline the eye circles in black. Paint the beak next, making the point sharp and well defined. The wide upper end should be ragged-looking to create the illusion of small overlapping feathers. Next use a medium flat brush to encircle the face with short, dense strokes. Create feathery points along the bottom of the face. Fill in the rest of the head shape with solid black all the way around. Let the paint dry.

Now take up your finest brush and switch to gold paint softened with a little white. Use this color to make thin, dense lines like sunrays emanating from the eyes and beak. Leave a border of white encircling the eyes, but allow your brushstrokes to overlap some of the dark areas on the head. Use gold at full strength to fill in the eye circles. The owl's eyes will be the focal point of the piece, so take your time to paint them as neat and round as you can. If you accidentally paint over your black outlines, retrace them in black later when the eyes are dry.



Shade the back of the head.



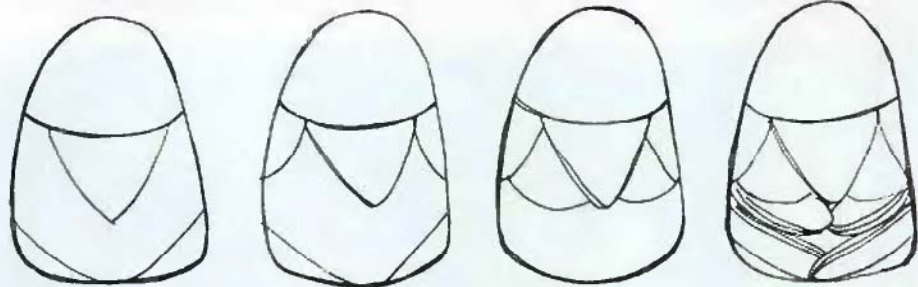
Subtle gold highlights surround the eyes and beak.



Outline with bold black strokes.



Gold eye color.



Sketching the feather pattern.

4 Wing and Tail Feather Layout.

Once the back is dry, use chalk to sketch the pattern for the feathers.

Begin at the neck and extend a V shape halfway down the back, mirroring the V of the tail. On each side make narrower V shapes like epaulettes at the shoulders. Connect the bottom points of these V shapes with curved lines. Below these curved lines, sketch in two sets of overlapping feather patches as shown. If you are dissatisfied with your layout, rub out the chalk and revise.



Feathers meet to form V shapes.



Feather design.

5 Painting the Feathers.

When you're satisfied with the layout, add a series of white strokes along the back V with a small or medium brush. Use your narrower brush to outline both upper and lower sets of wing feathers, and make a series of white dots along the two curving lines connecting the shoulders to the back V.

Next, mix burnt sienna and gold paint in equal proportions to get a warm golden-brown. With your narrow brush make a row of connected U shapes along the white neckline in back. Do a second row below the first, starting each U in the middle of the one above so that you have an overlapping effect. You should have room for four or more rows, each one shorter than the one above until there is space



Outline the tail feathers with a liner brush.



U shapes overlap at the neck.

for only a single U at the point. Do a similar pattern on the epaulettes at each shoulder.

To connect the shoulder pattern and the back pattern, make a series of diagonal feather lines as shown. Add depth and visual interest to the very bottom set of wing feathers by running

several thin lines of brown alongside the white outlines.

Add black to the brown color you've been using and shade the bottom edges of each scalloped row of U-shaped feathers. Use this same color to shadow the base with thin, wispy brushstrokes.



Paint a series of overlapping U shapes at each shoulder.



Diagonal feather lines connect the wings to the back.



Delicate brown lines are interspersed with white among the tail feathers.

6 Head Feathers.

Going back to the head, use a clean, narrow brush and white paint to begin a series of short, crooked, broken lines starting along the top border of the face and radiating back into the black area of the head. Allow your strokes to become more uniform as you work around the sides of the head. The strokes should radiate out like short spokes. Add consecutive layers of similar strokes to cover the back and sides of the head.



White wavy lines radiate from the top of the head.



Continue layering white lines...



... down the back of the head.

7 Feather Details.

Switch back to the deep brown shade and add crisp details to the lighter brown feathers at the breast. Paint a row of dense, random strokes just below the neckline. Then scatter more of these lines in clustered sets among the breast feathers.



Detail the breast area with random fine lines.

8 Finishing Details.

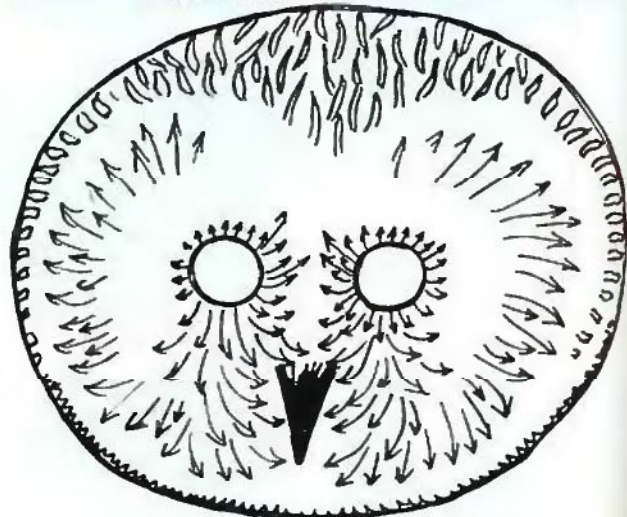
Surround the eyes with delicate lashlike strokes. At the inside lower corner of each eye, elongate the strokes and fan them out to look particularly dense and heavy. Allow a few strokes to reach into the top of the beak and a few more to stretch horizontally above the beak from either side until they almost touch.

Fan another set of strokes below each eye. A few should even overlap the top of the beak, while others curve away in the opposite direction.

Brush in a set of short lines just inside the face oval from either side of the V. Follow the curve of the face. Refer to the directional guide for feather placement.

Fill in the eyes with black, oval irises. The irises should be slightly skewed toward the center of each eye circle. Darken the upper portion of each eye with burnt sienna to add depth. Then highlight the eye by stroking a narrow half-circle of bright yellow paint around the lower half.

Finally, switch to white paint and define any light areas that may require more detail with your narrow brush. Pay particular attention to the outer edges of the wings on either side of the breast. These feathers should look fluffy.



Follow the arrows for facial feather patterns.



Face detail.



Irises should be slightly skewed toward the center.

You may also want to add some white strokes to the breast, overlapping the brown streaks here and there. Finish by placing two small dots in the inside upper quadrant of each eye for a lifelike sparkle.

Owls are quite ornamental and will add an exciting touch to any decor. Try perching one or two on a section of wood for an almost sculptural effect.



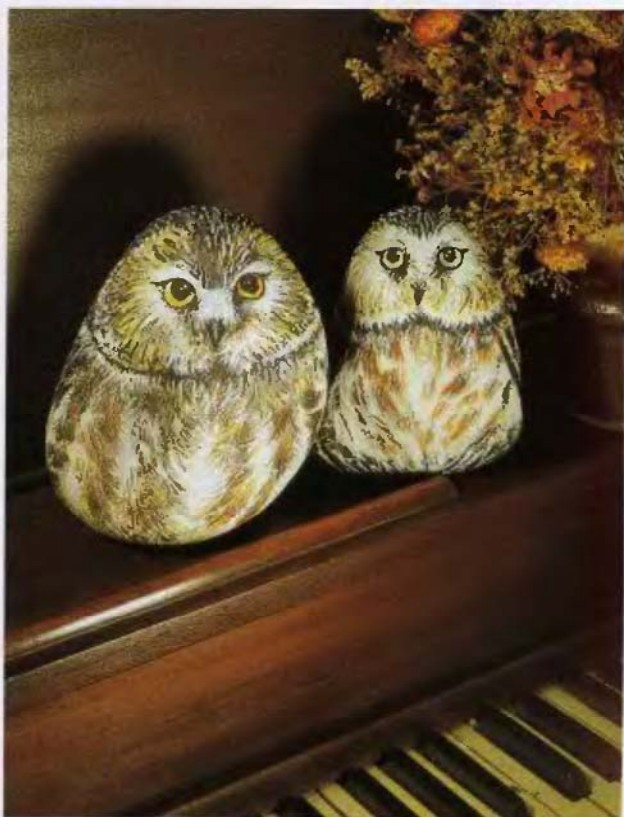
Touching up the wing edges.

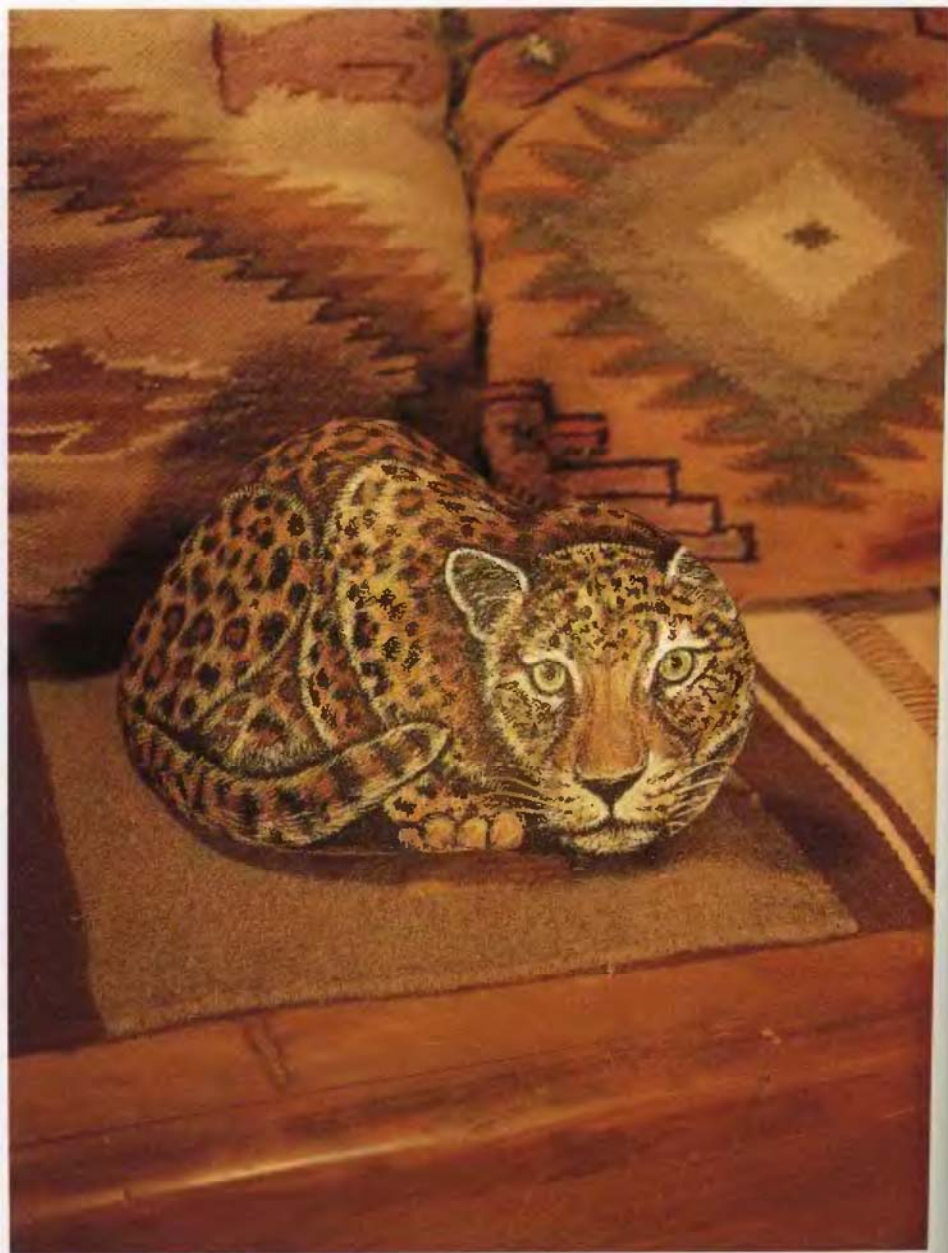


A white glimmer sparkles in each piercing eye.



Steps for eye detail.





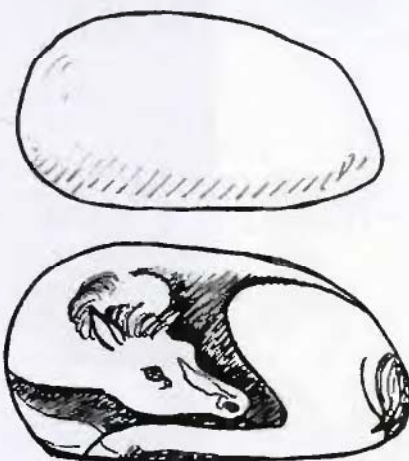
Expand Your Horizons

A Gallery of Stone Animals

The previous chapters have shown you how to create a number of different stone animals step-by-step. Once you have mastered the basic techniques there is no end to the variations. These next few pages are intended to give you just a taste of other possibilities.

Colt

Like fawns, colts are characterized by the way their long legs fold beneath them. Look for a fawn-type stone, one with a "crook" at one end to accommodate the angle of the back leg. The colt's head is longer than a fawn's, the muzzle more rounded, and the ears slightly shorter.



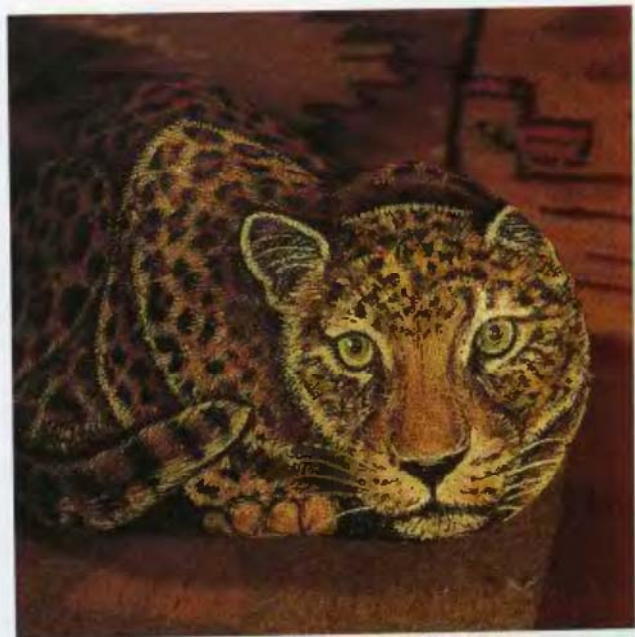
Colt stone and layout.



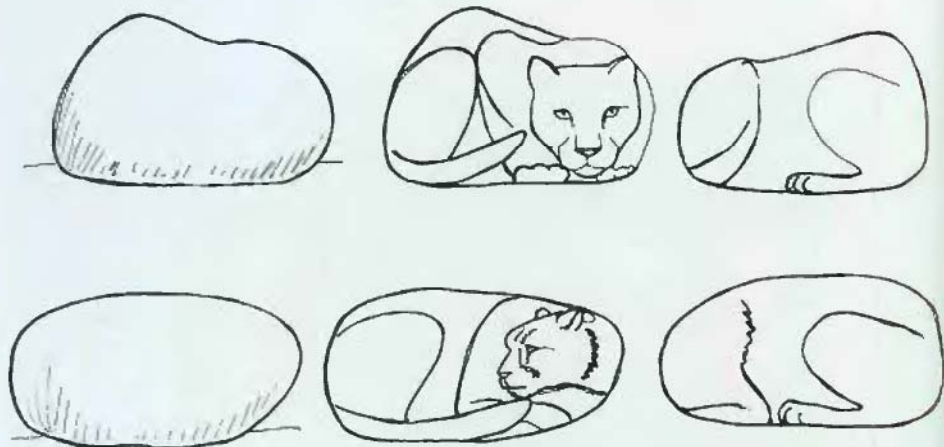
A colt nestled in the hay.

Wild Cats

The leopard and cheetah are two wild cats that make arresting subjects. Note the way a lump on the leopard stone was transformed into a shoulder blade. Wild cats may be handled much like domestic cats, but are most effective in crouching rather than curled positions. Other wild cats to try are tigers, lions, cougars and bobcats. Photographs of these animals will help you envision how they might fit onto stones.



Here's my leopard curled up on the hearth at home.



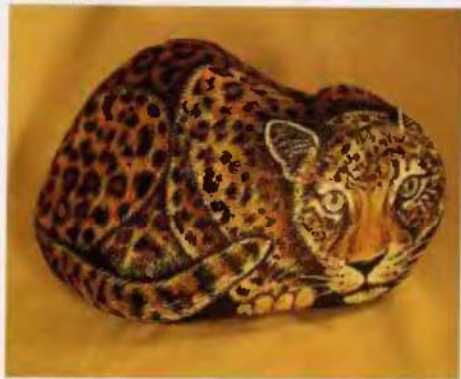
Stone shapes and layout for wildcats.



Cheetah (front).



Cheetah (rear).



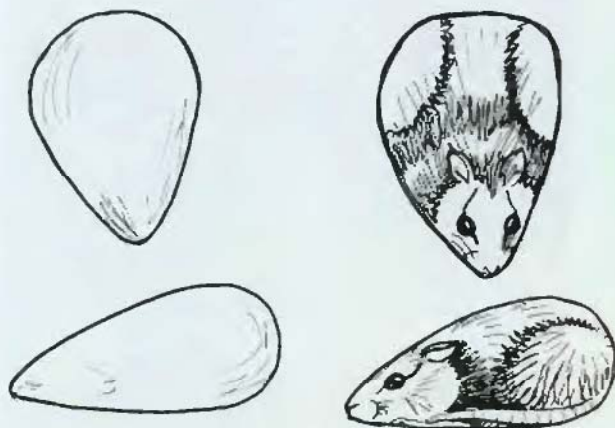
Leopard (front).



Leopard (rear).

Mouse

Good mouse stones aren't always easy to find, but if you come across one, these little rodents can be fun to paint. Look for a pear-shaped stone. It should be similar to that for a rock rabbit, but more pointed at the end and preferably a little flatter overall. In coloring and execution this project is also similar to the rabbit, the differences being primarily the short, more rounded ears and larger, bulgy, closely set black eyes. The tail can be painted in as though wrapped around one side, or you can glue on a length of rawhide lacing.



Mouse rocks and layout.



A very cautious mouse.

Pandas

These roly-poly critters create real "panda-monium" among animal lovers and are surprisingly easy to paint. Look for a plump "tombstone"-shaped rock. The top in particular needs to be broad and well rounded for best results. The panda is basically black and white, with dark brown for the eyes and a touch of gold mixed with gray to detail its white fur for softer, more subtle shading.



Side.



Rear.



Panda layout.



Front.

Dog

This little fellow seems to be imploring someone to give him a treat. I used an upright stone with a pronounced forward tilt. Small, long-haired dogs can be handled like long-haired cats in a crouched position.

Side.



Front.



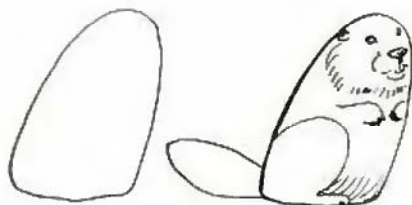
Rear.



Stone shapes and layout choices for long-haired dogs.

Beavers

Like raccoons, beavers can be done in two basic poses, either crouching or standing upright with the paws tucked under the chin. I cut leaf-shaped tails from a sheet of scrap leather and darken them with a light coat of black spray paint in a matt finish. Leave extra length on the tail so the base can be glued to the bottom of the stone. Although a beaver's teeth are not always visible in photographs, I invariably paint them in as people seem disappointed when that distinctive trademark is not apparent.

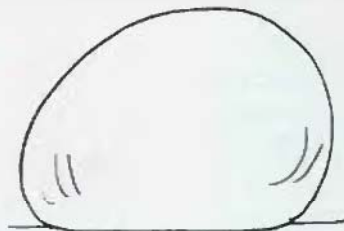


Various beaver projects.



Double Animals

A number of double animals fit nicely on rounded stones of assorted sizes. While foxes with kits may be "too cute" for your taste, others are charmed by the combination of mother and baby. The fox layout is in the same fashion as a single animal, then the kit is added, usually tucked behind the tail. The same thing can be done with a mother raccoon and her kit. Make sure your babies look like babies, though, and not simply like miniature versions of adults. Usually this means giving them shorter muzzles and ears, and larger eyes.



Some arrangements.





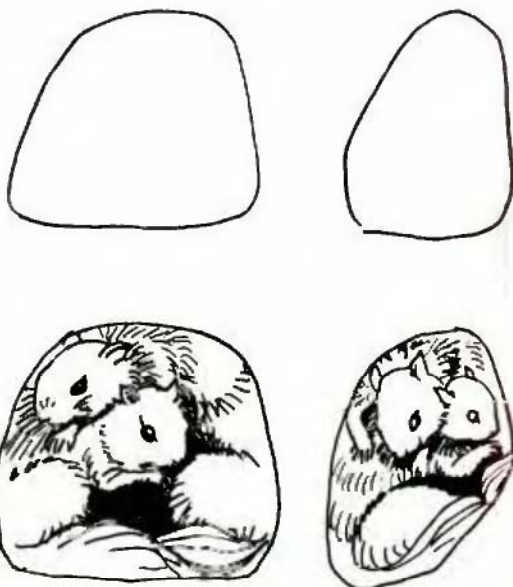
Doubles can be twins or mother-baby combinations.

Double cats and kittens. Not only are these fun to do, they can be done on a wide range of rock shapes. You can make identical twins by painting the same animal twice, or vary the position, expression and coloration for an even more dramatic look. Double cats can also be done with one facing forward and the other facing backward.



Double squirrels. I have painted these baby squirrels a number of times since coming across a photograph that helped me see how I could fit them onto a stone. Ordinarily squirrels are difficult subjects because their fluffy tails do not readily conform to stone shapes. But these two, clinging to one another with their tails wrapped around their feet, are made to order for painting on stone.

Approach them much as you would wild bunnies, beginning with a black base coat. Note that squirrels' front paws have very distinctive fingers.



Sample arrangements.





Paired squirrels (back).



Paired squirrels (side).

Pebble Pets

There is something irresistible about miniature animals. If you enjoy doing very fine detail, these can be a lot of fun. Kids in particular seem to enjoy working on such a small scale. Be sure to select smooth stones for best effect.

Any animal in this book can be done in a "pebble pet" version with a bit of patience. They come in handy as small gift items and usually sell as fast as I can make them.

Other animals I have painted over the years include calves, wolves, brown bears, cocker spaniel, chow chow and German shepherd dogs, and even a ferret. Trying new animals keeps stone painting fresh and exciting. I am always looking for new challenges. That's one more reason why stone painting can be such a satisfying creative outlet.



A pougourn of
pebble pets.





Display your rock animals in the house . . .



. . . on the porch . . .

Enhancing Your Decor With Rock Animals

Your rock animals can be displayed anywhere in your living space. They can add various moods to your room, from cute and cozy to dramatic and exotic. Use your imagination to display each unique and beautiful conversation piece. My rock animals have made their home in every room in, and out of, our house—even the barn.



. . . even in the barn!

Marketing Tips

I hope the projects in this book have inspired you to keep painting stones, refining your techniques and developing your own special style. With time you are likely to see even more possibilities than I have shown you. Friends and relatives may come to treasure your stone creations as gifts at Christmas and birthdays as mine have. If you find yourself thoroughly hooked on stone painting, you might begin to wonder if the quality of your work is good enough to sell.

Displaying your work. One way to find out is to participate in an arts and crafts fair. Choose an event where booth space is relatively inexpensive. Plan ahead and make sure you have enough inventory to make the venture worthwhile. Put some thought into how best to display your pieces. Polished slabs of hardwood make attractive bases for larger works and will give them a "sculptural" appearance. Cats can be nestled on pillows or into inexpensive baskets, but be sure to figure the cost of the pillow or basket in your sales price. Many people will expect to get them as part of the package. Sections of logs make rustic pedestals for wildlife stones like raccoons, while a simple bed of straw can set off a fawn rock in an appealing way.

Pricing. Pricing your work will probably be a matter of trial and error. Beginners may start by keeping prices low, say under ten dollars on smaller pieces, to encourage those oh-so-inspiring first sales. As skill level increases, the prices your work commands will naturally rise. If your stones sell briskly, that is evidence the price is too low and could be raised. Another school of thought, however, is that an artist should begin with a higher price and adjust it gradually downward until it seems acceptable to a reasonable



number of customers.

Building a business. Once you have established that there is a market for your painted stones, it's a good idea to print some business cards to pass out. As you become more proficient, you will almost certainly be asked about commissions. Cat owners, in particular, are apt to want their pet's likeness captured on stone. Insist on receiving good photos of the subject, and agree on a price at the outset to avoid any misunderstandings. Dog lovers may also inquire about stone portraits of their pets. Due to the tremendous differences between breeds, dogs can be trickier than cats, but if you are comfortable with the challenge, give it a try. You can always forfeit the commissions if you find yourself unable to do justice to the project. Short-haired dogs are somewhat similar to fawns,

while long-haired dogs can be handled more in the manner of Persian cats or foxes. I rarely do dogs unless it is by commission because people who love dogs usually have a favorite breed, while cat lovers tend to be less particular. And I always offer a money-back guarantee on commissioned work to insure satisfaction.

By distributing your cards and displaying your work at various fairs and shows, you should be able to build up business in custom work and special orders, particularly around the holidays.

When experience has given you an idea of how much you can realistically charge, the next step may be to market your stones through retail outlets. Shop owners on the lookout for unusual items might inquire about a wholesale pricelist. Remember most

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Lin Wellford comes from a family of artists that include sculptors, painters and commercial artists. She studied under numerous instructors before majoring in advertising design at the University of Florida. She has won many awards for her Pen and Ink sketches and watercolors. But since 1978 has concentrated on "Stone Menagerie"

Each piece is composed of two stones, one carved and one painted. Each creation is signed and acrylic seal. Ms. Wellford lives in Arkansas with her husband. But her work has reached all over the world and continues to attract art lovers alike.



Sample business card

retailers expect to double the price of anything they buy. Ask yourself, based on personal experience, what kind of wholesale pricing would give you a satisfactory return on your time and talent. You don't want to price your work out of the range most people are willing to pay. If you are a prolific painter as I am, wholesale accounts can expand your markets and keep you busy. But if you enjoy taking your time with each stone you paint and don't want to be pressured to produce quickly, wholesaling is probably not for you.

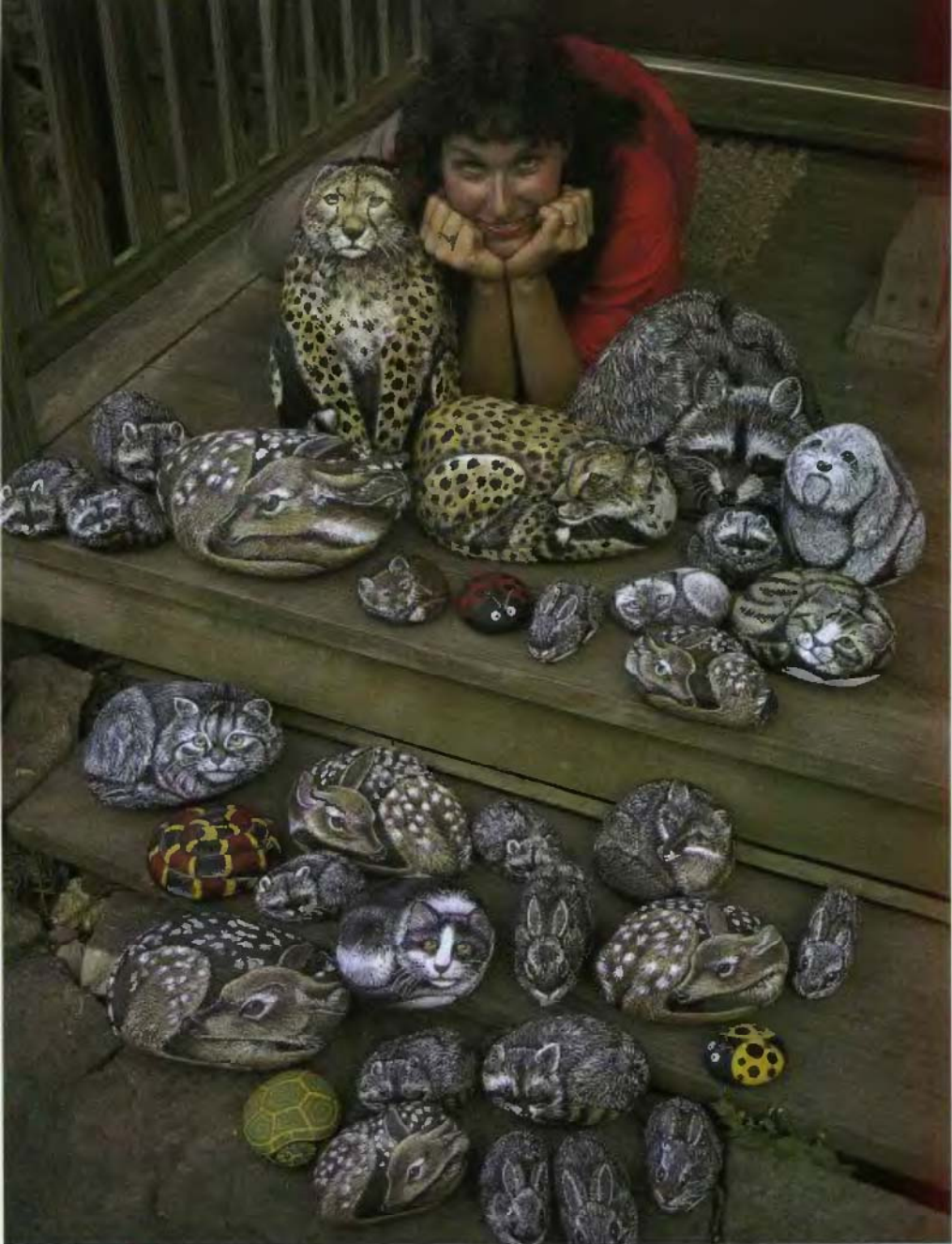
Another possibility is selling on commission. Since this requires a certain level of trust, stick to well-established businesses. The standard agreement for selling on commission is that you set the price for your work and the shop owner keeps a portion of the sales price of each item sold, usually be-

tween 30 and 40 percent. The advantage of this type of arrangement is that you will make more than you might be able to charge wholesale while keeping the actual sales price lower. On the down side, you won't get paid until a piece sells. Commission also means more bookkeeping for you. It's important to keep careful records of which items you have placed in what stores. Most shopkeepers are honest and pay within thirty days on any sales they make. But nearly everyone who has sold work on commission can tell stories of waiting months for payment, or of having unscrupulous merchants close down and disappear, taking their ill-gotten inventory along. So it pays to be discriminating in your choice of outlets. Look for stores that specialize in handcrafted items, or upscale gift shops that appreciate the value of your

unique, one-of-a-kind work. Better still are galleries whose clientele will see your stones as works of art rather than mere crafts. My best outlet by far is a wildlife art gallery where my work commands a respectable price and turnover is dependably steady.

Yet another option is to see if your area has a craft mall where booth space is rented by the month and sales are handled by staff salespeople. You will be charged a commission on any items that sell, but unlike other outlets, you can set up your own sales area. An attractive display and realistic prices could make this a lucrative venture.

Whether you choose to produce in volume or confine your efforts to "limited editions" for friends and family, stone painting can be a terrific low-cost hobby and a truly satisfying outlet for your creative urge.



Author, Lin Wellford, on her porch with part of her stone menagerie.

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